

Records of spying during 1960s sought

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WASHINGTON (AP) - Rep. John Lewis, a former student civil rights activist, said Monday the Pentagon should disclose the records of the Army's surveillance of civil rights leaders during the 1960s.

Mr. Lewis, D-Ga., asked Rep. Ronald Dellums, D-Calif., and Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., chairmen of the House and Senate armed services committees, to seek the documents and make them public.

His request came after *The Memphis Commercial Appeal* reported that the Army spied on black civilians, including three generations of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s family, apparently out of fear that they could be influenced by foreign enemies.

"There should be a disclosure of what happened, how it happened," Mr. Lewis said. "If they fail to do that, there should be a congressional investigation."

Capt. Bill Buckner, Army spokesman, said in a statement that the Army was reviewing its records in light of the allegations.

"We do not presently have answers to specific details," he said. "Until this research is complete, which we expect will be in the near future, we have no verifiable information for release."

Mr. Lewis said he wants the documents made public because they could resolve "the unthinkable question of whether the United States Army conspired with others and may have been involved" in King's 1968 assassination.

J. Clay Smith Jr., a constitutional law professor at Howard University School of Law, said he learned of the Army's spying while serving as a military lawyer in Washington during the 1960s.

"The military was definitely there. It was very uncomfortable, as a black officer, to hear names of people that you respected branded as dissidents," Mr. Smith said. "It may reach back farther than we know."

Mr. Smith said that as a result of the spying some people might have been "denied political appointments or access to government for reasons that are unknown to them. It's only fair for people to know."